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ABSTRACT

The pattern toward an increase in the number of states using some form of competency testing prior to the certification of educators is substantiated in this paper. Competency testing programs are implemented at three distinct levels: (1) before entrance into a teacher education program near the end of the sophomore year in college; (2) at the end of teacher education near the end of the senior year in college or during the first year of teaching; or, (3) for certification renewal as mandated by the state. The paper includes an update on the teacher certification testing activities across the United States as well as a discussion of some of the issues and concerns associated with such programs. While certification testing appears to offer a solution to certain problems and issues related to quality control and selection, it also raises a series of new problems and issues which should be addressed by states which are considering the development and implementation of competency testing for certification. (Author/DWH)

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Teacher Certification Testing Across the United States and A Consideration of Some of the Issues

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Running head: TEACHER CERTIFICATION TESTING

Astract

The clear pattern toward an increase in the number of states using some form of competency testing prior to the certification of educators is substantiated in this paper. It includes an update on the teacher certification testing activities across the United States as well as a discussion of some of the issues and concerns associated with such programs. While certification testing appears to offer a solution to certain problems and issues related to quality control and selection, it also raises a series of new problems and issues which should be addressed by states which are considering the development and implementation of competency testing for certification.

Teacher Certification Testing Across the United States

and

A Consideration of Some of the Issues

Teacher competency testing for the purpose of screening persons prior to state certification continues to be on the upswing in the United States. The testing is usually of the paper-pencil type although teacher performance assessment testing (observing and assessing teachers' performance on-the-job) has been gaining zeal. Sandefur (1985) reports thirteen states that are presently implementing, developing, or planning on-the-job assessment as part of their certification process. This paper provides an update on the more prevalent paper-pencil type of competency testing activity, as well as a discussion of some of the issues that should be considered by states pondering the development and implementation of these teacher certification or competency testing programs. While certification testing appears to offer a solution to certain problems and issues related to quality control, selection, and public relations, it also raises a series of new problems and issues.

Competency Testing Activity Updated

Delineating which states are involved with teacher competency testing, where they are in their involvement, and what tests they are using or planning to use is not an easy or exact task. Since the movement is growing and is often a <u>very</u> political endeavor, situations can and do change rapidly. Even though a state hasn't announced or mandated plans for a program, there may be those in the state who are contemplating such a program. As pointed out in a 1984 article (Flippo & Foster), between

the time that article was written and its publication (only about 6 months later), the situation had already changed. Certainly, since discussing the states' activities for another paper (Schnittjer & Flippo, 1984), the activities have increased for many states and the number of states involved at different levels has also grown.

Most of the paper-pencil teacher testing is being done by Educational Testing Service (ETS) or National Evaluation Systems (NES), although some states are using other tests (Colorado requires the California Achievement Test (CAT); Oregon uses the California Basic Skills Test). (See Tables 1 and 2 for listings of the ETS and NES states and the types of tests validated or developed for those states.)

Where are the states now in their involvement, or who is doing what? Many states do have some sort of testing program in place and are fully implementing those programs (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah). In other states, testing programs are still at some stage of development (i.e., all planned testing is not as yet implemented) and plans are that they will be fully implemented between 1985 and 1987 (Connecticut, Hawaii, Kentucky, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia). Several other states have decided to test competency, but have not made commitments yet regarding which tests they will use. Plans indicate that programs will be implemented by the close of 1988 (Indiana, Kansas, Maine, Nebraska, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington). In some states with already existing competency testing programs, planning

or discussion is underway to expand testing to other levels. For example, Georgia and Oklahoma are planning for career ladder testing of their already practicing teachers. (See Note 1.)

Finally, in other states, the issue of teacher competency or certification testing is still being explored. Sandefur (1985) reports these states as Illinois, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. It is to these and other undecided states that I really address this paper. There are questions, issues, and problems that should be asked or addressed before a state takes the plunge.

Levels of Competency Testing

Since teacher certification or competency testing programs are currently being implemented and/or planned at three distinct levels, it seems propitious here to describe briefly the levels at which this testing can take place.

Before Entrance into Teacher Education

This is usually done near the end of the sophomore year of college as an entrance or screening exam into the teacher education programs. These tests are usually either basic skills tests and/or general knowledge tests. The basic skills tests usually assess the candidates' reading, writing, and computational skills. The general knowledge tests usually assess the candidates' more general breadth of knowledge in literature and fine arts, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences.

At the End of Teacher Education

This is usually done near the end of the senior year, in the fifth year of a five-year program, or in many states during the first year of

teaching. These tests are usually either pedagogy/professional knowledge tests and/or content knowledge tests in specific certification areas or fields. The pedagogy tests usually attempt to assess the candidates' knowledge of teaching methodology/practices and instructional planning/implementation/evaluation. The content area knowledge tests usually attempt to assess the candidates' specific content knowledge of the field or fields in which they intend to teach and/or are seeking certification.

For Certificate Renewal

This can be administered whenever teachers next come due for certification renewal, or, whenever a state mandates that it be done. Tests given at this time could consist of any combination of those tests already mentioned, depending of course on the state's decision. Some states do or will require these tests for all current teachers (Arkansas, Georgia, Texas), while some states do or will consider use of these tests for assignment of salary levels/career ladders (Florida, Georgia, Oklahoma, and Tennessee).

This paper will not attempt to consider the issues and problems surrounding the testing of practicing teachers at this level, since this would open up many other issues that must be considered. Since the teachers' organizations and unions are against this level of testing (McCarthy, 1985), there is currently not as strong a national movement toward it as toward entry level testing. However as noted, some states have already implemented this testing and others have been exploring ideas along these lines. The tendency to expand the "turfdoms" of teacher competency testing is strong (e.g., the Georgia legislature has just passed an

education-reform act which includes career ladder testing and extensive recertification testing, Olson, 1985). We will surely be hearing more about this type of teacher testing in the future.

Selection of Tests

Basically, there are two choices regarding the selection of tests that could be used for competency/certification testing: existing standardized tests, or customized tests. As pointed out earlier, most of the tests currently used by the states are available from ETS and NES. The ETS tests are standardized and the NES tests are "customized." The standardized tests from ETS can be validated for use in a state to hold up in court decisions (McCarthy, 1985; NTE Policy Council, 1983) and meet the Uniform Guidelines content (1978). The customized tests from NES can be developed to meet a state's certification areas, and also can be validated to hold up in court and meet Uniform Guidelines (McCarthy, 1985; Rubinstein, McDonough, & Allan, 1982).

There are two basic differences to consider when deciding on standardized tests or customized tests: cost and implementation.

Costs

Customized tests are much more costly than standardized tests. For instance, NES (Allan, 1985) estimated that a ball-park figure for development of content tests for certification would be $35,000 per test, and, when the time came for the test to be revamped because of extensive changes in a field, it could cost about $8,000-$9,000 for that work. If, a state (like Georgia) needed 28 different content tests, it could cost approximately $980,000 just for the content test development, using Allan's estimate.

Allan (1985) also estimated that a customized basic skills test would cost somewhere between another $60,000 to $80,000 to develop. These figures do not include the estimate for extensive necessary revisions, state department of education staff in order to manage a teacher certification testing program, or development of study guides for each of the tests. Additionally, Allan did not give estimates for development of professional knowledge/pedagogy test development, or for general knowledge test development.

Standardized tests are more moderate in costs. Since the tests have already been developed, the only cost involved is for validation. Bosworth (1985) estimated that a state validity study for all twenty-five of the available National Teacher Examinations (NTE) content specialty tests would cost $50,000. The estimate for validating the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST, basic skills) is $25,000-$50,000, depending on how many of the three test areas a state wanted to use. Bosworth indicated that another $10,000-$15,000 would cover validation of the professional knowledge/pedagogy test, and the set of four general knowledge tests could be validated for about $50,000.

A comparison, according to these estimates, would indicate that if a state were interested in a basic skills test for entry into teacher education programs and content specialty tests for certification in each field, it would initially spend around $935,000-$955,000 for NES to develop a basic skills test and 25 content tests, or $75,000-$100,000 for ETS to validate the PPST basic skills test and the 25 NTE content specialty tests for the state. Obviously, the customized tests are considerably more costly.

Implementation

Customized testing programs, like those implemented by most of the NES states, require that a unit or division in the state department of education coordinate the program. The state "owns" the tests and really "owns" the program. Accepting this "ownership" responsibility means that many details and problems must be handled by the state: test development quality complaints; revision requests; record keeping of test banks, objectives, scores; examinee complaints; problems with score reports being understood; test site locations, selections, dates, and problems during administrations; monitoring the testing contractor; etc.. Implementing a customized state-owned testing program is a major undertaking. Consideration of how major it really is should be done before a state enters into it.

Standardized testing programs, like those implemented by most of the ETS states, require fewer staff and less program management. The tests and details for administering them, once the initial validation is complete, are really in the hands of the contractor. The contractor owns the tests; the state has only had them validated for its use.

Questions and Pressures of Concern

When deliberations to consider some sort of testing of preservice or entry level teachers begins, the first question that should be addressed is "Why are we considering this testing?" I can think of three possible reasons or pressures that might cause a state to explore the establishment of some sort of screening program: (a) the quality of teacher education programs/students in the state; (b) the process of selection of teachers used by local education agencies (LEAs) in the state, as well as supply/demand

considerations; and (c) the state's public image and other political pressures.

Once the "Why?" question is addressed, and the reason(s) or pressure(s) has been initially identified, a series of other questions related to that reason or pressure should be asked and answered.

Quality of Teacher Education Programs

What are some of the questions that should be asked related to the overall quality of the state's teacher education programs and students? Here are some suggestions: Are the universities and colleges in the state generally considered, on a national level, to be good or even excellent? Are the teacher education programs in the state generally good to excellent? Do the teacher education programs have high standards and/or have they recently raised standards before accepting students and before allowing them to student teach? Does the state currently have a program approval mechanism in place in order to be assured that teacher education programs comply with state requirements? Do the recent graduates of teacher education programs in the state appear to be competent and bright?

If "yes" can be answered to each of these questions, it would seem that, at least for this reason or pressure, the state would not need an entry level teacher certification testing program. If some questions cannot be answered positively, than the specific question needs to be explored further before a decision to use tests and which tests is made. Often there are other solutions. For example, if the state doesn't have a program approval system in place, perhaps that approach would suffice. It certainly would be less costly and problematic and probably more

effective than any testing program could be. Or, if several teacher education programs in the state do not have known high standards for accepting students, perhaps the state department of education could include certain minimum entrance criteria as part of their program approval/renewal mechanism. Discussion related to the issues and problems regarding quality follows in another section of this paper.

Selection and Supply/Demand of Teachers

What questions should be raised regarding policies to select teachers and the supply and demand of teachers in that state? For one thing, a state should consider if there is a shortage of teachers, and if so, in what areas and in what fields? Is there an overabundance of teachers, and if so, in what areas and what fields? Are applicants who do not have the coursework and other credentials required to teach in specific teaching fields in the state getting teaching certificates? Is there evidence to suggest that new, potentially excellent/qualified teachers tend not to be hired by the LEAs because not so potentially excellent/qualified teachers are getting the jobs instead? Questions regarding policies for selection, and supply and demand of teachers would certainly raise other questions and issues regarding the possible need for and effect of competency testing for this area. For instance, if LEA policies tend to discriminate against less competent and less qualified applicants in favor of more competent (for example, those with high grades in teacher education courses and student teaching) and of more qualified applicants (for example, those with previous experience, excellent recommendations, and overall high GPAs and/or additional positive qualifications), than the employment

practices of the schools themselves would tend to screen entry level teachers. Or, if it were evident that persons with less then the required credentials were getting certified, than perhaps the state's teacher certification department or their procedures needs to be addressed. Discussion related to the issues and problems regarding selection follows in another section of this paper.

Public Image and Politics

What about the public image and the influence of the political arena? What questions should be addressed? This is an area where questions may vary from state to state, but there are still some basic questions to be asked. Is there an overall education quality problem in this state? Where does this state rank or stand in relation to the other states regarding education and/or student performance? What kind of a national image does this state have regarding education? Is the local public image of education in this state unfairly low? If so, have attempts been made to publicize the state's ranking in education as compared with other states? Or, have attempts been made to make the public aware of the excellence of the teacher education programs in the state, as compared to other states, or as compared to requirements beyond what the state mandates for certification? Is there already a problem getting support for education in the state? Finally, is this teacher testing idea a political manuever to make the state look as if it is demanding quality teachers, even though none of the questions and probing indicate that quality, selection, and public image are serious concerns?

If answers to these questions reveal that public image is the problem, a state should explore ways of changing the image, rather than just jumping on the very costly teacher testing bandwagon. If it is obvious that the real concern is political, and that a decision has really already been made to do some testing, than the state should consider the least offensive, problematic, and costly method(s) or levels of testing. The answer may be "minimum testing" rather than "extensive minimum competency testing." This next section explores some of the issues and problems related to decisions in each of these areas: quality, selection, and public image.

Issues and Problems Raised

Quality

Can quality really be improved by certification testing? Some states (Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Oklahoma) claim that it can ("State Activity," 1980; Scherer, 1983); however, their evidence usually consists of rising test score data. Educational researchers have questioned the validity of the data and improvement of teacher quality claims (Kauchak, 1984; McPhee & Kerr, 1985; Sykes, 1983; Weaver, 1984). When the data and the circumstances surrounding the issues are better understood, it becomes evident that rising test scores indicate no more than that more persons are able to pass the tests.

When using certification tests to mandate the quality of teacher education programs and the products of those programs, certain issues and problem areas should be carefully considered.

A wedge develops between colleges/universities and the state department of education. The use of the test is usually perceived as a measure of the quality of the universities, faculties, and their teacher education programs. Even though a state department of education may deny it, the idea is undeniable, if a state chooses to test the products of the teacher education programs. The universities feel strongly that their graduates are competent. To test them puts the universities on the defensive (Jacobson, 1985). Rather than act on a collegial relationship with the department of education, adverse or even hostile relationships often develop.

Results from these tests are often compared. Data indicate the pass/fail rates at each institution. Some institutions do far better than others. These comparisons are never fair, given the different populations of students that often attend the different institutions within the state.

The testing also often causes a rift between the different faculties/programs at the universities and the education faculties/programs. Many who finish a teacher certification program take their major coursework from other programs. For instance, the pre-service history teacher takes most of his/her coursework from the social sciences or history department. If that person is not later successful passing the certification test, the teacher education program often is given the responsibility. This rift between university programs is not a healthy one. It goes further in causing negative feelings between the universities and the state department of education.

Teaching toward passing the test. When it eventually becomes obvious to the universities' faculties that their programs are being compared

and/or that their students' abilities to pass the test are reflecting on their programs' images or even survival, the trend to teach toward the test rears its ugly head. Minimum competencies can become the curriculum. Most school systems instituted the widespread minimum competency testing of children between 1975 and 1980 and have had to grapple with this issue. Even so, evidence indicated by the recent major studies in education show that our schools and children are still not up to par. As a matter of fact, they may be suffering from the mediocrity that competency testing tends to promote. Research has indicated that this widespread testing can often retard rather than advance the interests of students, since bureaucratically sanctioned testing tends to place more focus on the tests than on the substance of what the tests are intended to measure (Haney, 1984).

In some colleges/universities in some of the states implementing certification testing, pop courses or program courses have developed on "how to pass the test." Since the objectives or content of the tests are available (and often even promoted), these courses focus on those objectives. When students taking the course have already experienced the test, remembered test questions are recorded and studied. Many testing programs use the same questions over and over again, rotating questions only when they have been used to test several hundred examinees. For some tests with a relatively small number of examinees (for teaching fields that don't attract large numbers of persons), test questions can remain the same for <u>years</u> of administrations. Naturally, test scores go up.

Excellent programs are not necessarily reflected by test results. Universities that abhor the concept of mediocrity are not necessarily rewarded by students automatically passing the test. Sometimes those who know more, read more into the questions. Their knowledge of the most recent research and literature can cause many choices in addition to the "correct one" to be plausible. Again, mediocrity (or not knowing as much) can become rewarded, and excellence can be punished. Some of these excellent programs can be put on probation or even abolished for consistent evidence that their students do not do as well on the test as those programs that might be teaching the test.

Problems caused by programs with low pass rates. What about the colleges/universities who consistently have low passing rates? What is to be done? Should the programs be put on probation or closed down? Should more pressure be put on the programs to get students to pass the tests? Should the results be ignored because the issue is too embarrassing, awkward, or sensitive to handle? For instance, what if the programs are in colleges/universities with large minority populations? These are issues that should be dealt with and agreed upon before a testing program is planned. If the state spends large amounts of money to institute a testing program, what is to be done with the results of those tests? If they are ignored, why bother to give them? If they are not ignored, how will the state deal with these sensitive problems?

Test scores eventually tend to rise because the questions, objectives, or content are known. This screens out fewer and fewer persons. Since the purpose of the testing should be to screen out persons who are not competent

enough to teach in the schools, tests with known questions or content become less and less effective at screening the more they are administered. How does the state deal with that? Are the tests continued anyway and persons are virtually "rubber stamped" into the profession? Are the cut-scores raised? How will rising scores be handled? Perhaps the rise in scores will be handled as a public relations move to indicate that the testing has caused an improvement in teacher education in the state?

What about those who still don't pass? After repeatedly taking the test, some persons still can't pass it. In most states the tests can be taken over and over again, but there are always some who never seem to be able to pass the test (i.e., really only a relatively small number of persons don't eventually pass the tests when programs have been in existance for several years and examinees persevere by repeatedly taking the tests). Are they in a minority/protected group? Are they a VIP to someone with influence at the state level (i.e., the granddaughter of a member of the legislature, the son of a school board member, the daughter of the superintendent's next door neighbor, the assistant principal who is being groomed for principal and needs to pass the test first)--more problems for the state department of education. In some instances, situations can conceivably get so embarrassing that some examinees may be given "special attention," like extensive tutoring, until they finally "just pass" the test.

In some states, study guides are developed to get some of the pressure off of the state and/or off of the universities. These study guides often give examinees tips on how to take the tests, how to study for them, and

include sample test questions and references to use in order to prepare for the objective or content being tested. The study guides can be costly to develop. While they are initially a positive attempt, they can also result in problems. If they are good, test scores might rise even further without improving quality. If the guides don't help persons having severe problems, they could be discredited as poor or inadequate study guides.

Has quality been improved or diminished? Just passing the test doesn't indicate quality. In fact, it might negate quality. There is often no way to compare or identify the individuals who "just pass the tests" with the individuals who "topped out on the tests." Both groups show up as pass data. The bottom line is: Is quality really improved? Are programs really better? What has really been accomplished?

Selection

Can hiring practices really be improved by requiring certification tests? Will more qualified teachers be selected for open teaching positions? How will selection of teachers be affected? Will the certification policies and practices of the state be enhanced? And, finally, will the state attract more able and more qualified teachers for its open positions? None of these questions can be answered empirically. The issues and resulting problems however should be carefully considered to provide a more accurate guess at the answers.

Shortages in certain teaching fields. There are already shortages in some teaching fields. Will additional shortages develop in fields where people are not passing tests? Or, will the available applicants in a field be diminished further by some applicants either not passing the test

or choosing not to take the tests? If this happens, will others not as prepared for those fields be given temporary certificates or permission to teach in those shortage fields? Or will those in surplus teaching fields be asked to teach in shortage fields until prepared persons are recruited and pass the tests to become certified? In some states this does happen. (See Feistritzer, 1984 for details on the tremendous number of persons on emergency or probational certificates in the states.)

Certification complications. Will the tests add to and/or complicate the already time-consuming certification hassles that prevail in many states on both sides: the clerical problems for the state departments of education, and confusion and delay problems for the applicants? (Feistritzer indicates that "The certification of classroom teaches in the U.S. is a mess," p.36.) Will it sometimes appear that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing? In some states already implementing competency/certification programs, the teacher testing program is a separate unit from the teacher certification program.

What about experienced teachers and other qualified applicants coming from out-of-state? Would this testing requirement discourage them? Would they see it as "one more hoop to jump" and decide it may not be worth it?

Finally, what about reciprocity? What if someone took a state required test somewhere else and wanted the new state to accept it in lieu of its own test. Most of the states involved with these certification testing programs are adverse to reciprocity concerning the tests. In fact, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) has been trying for sometime to promote reciprocity and has so far failed (Cornett, 1982). States

adopting or developing the testing programs tend to make a case for the uniqueness of the teaching objectives and curriculum in their state from those in other states. This perceived uniqueness is one of their major justifications for requiring that everyone take and pass the tests before being certified.

Hiring practices by the LEAs. With use of the tests, will more competent and excellent teachers be hired? Since often only pass/fail results are given to the LEAs, principals, and others making employment decisions, it is possible that decisions will be made with less information available on appliants than if GPAs, student teaching grades/evaluations, recommendations, and experience were the criteria for selection. Of course, an LEA can decide or be allowed to use all the criteria. If so, given the limited information from the pass/fail score, that test information would be relatively useless. But if LEAs were pressured or required to use only the results of the state test, than certification tests might actually have a negative effect on selection of the most qualified individual. For instance, some persons advocating mass state testing programs argue that since grades and the criteria for them vary so much from institution to institution, the test results are an equalizer. If it isn't possible for those doing the hiring to distinguish between someone "who has just passed," perhaps after five or six tries, and someone who passed and did very well on his first try, less competent teachers may be hired.

Minority/protected groups. Who is being screened from the teaching profession? Will more minorities/protected groups be screened-from teaching because of lower pass rates on the tests? In states where the

testing programs are already implemented, the results indicate that more minorities/protected groups are being screened out than the majorities (Kauchak, 1984; McCaffery, 1984; Smith, 1984, 1985). How will the state deal with that data once it is collected? Legal issues here are not the problem. The major test developers, ETS and NES, are very attuned to the legal issues. As pointed out earlier, they develop and/or validate their tests to hold up in court.

The problem is that the data does show that the minorities do not fair as well on the certification tests as the white population. This is a major issue and a state implementing a program will have to deal with it even though it does hold up in court.

Public Image

As pointed out earlier, questions, issues, and problems regarding public image and politics vary considerably from state to state. However, when image and politics are the decisive pressures for instigating a teacher competency testing program, a state should look at the possible long-run issues and new public image problems that can arise from implementing such a program.

National image problems. Teacher certification testing programs do not necessarily create a positive national image for the states implementing them. For instance, prominent educators or other informed citizens might ask "What was wrong with the teacher education programs, or with education, in that state in order to cause that state to institute such a large and costly program?" Researchers and authors of papers on the competency testing of teachers movement have already pointed their fingers at the

South. They've implied that there has been an education problem in the southern states and that is why the SREB strongly recommended teacher testing ("The Need for Quality," 1981). That is why, they've implied, most of the southern states have jumped on the teacher testing bandwagon and the teacher testing programs mushroomed in the South.

The continued low public image of the South's education systems is still evident in statements that southern leaders sometimes make about themselves. For instance, some southern superintendents were reported as opposing the plan of the Council of Chief State School Officers, a collective of state-level superintendents, to develop a system of national indicators that can be used by the public for state-by-state school comparisons and can be used by states to measure their educational progress, because they said ". . . their states were likely to show up on the low end in terms of achievement." ("Top State Education Officials Support Indicators," 1985).

Local image problems. Once a program is implemented and data is collected, several negative images and feelings can develop within a state: (a) A negative image of some of the colleges/universities can develop when some institutions do better than others on these tests; (b) a negative image of some of the minority groups can develop if some groups do better than others on these tests; (c) a negative feeling can develop from the general public when they learn how much these testing programs cost; (d) a negative feeling, in general, about teachers can develop when the public learns that some of them can't pass the tests. Does that mean that some of the teachers who were certified in the past couldn't pass these tests? ("My child's teacher could be one of those!"); (e) a negative

feeling toward further support of education can develop. Already tight money for education programs for children can get even tighter when the public and the legislature know how much extra they are already spending on the teacher competency testing program.

Recommendations

This paper has painted a rather negative picture of the problems and issues surrounding teacher certification testing programs. It was meant to. Teacher certification testing is not the "final solution" or panacea for pressures regarding quality, selection, and public image. If teacher certification testing is implemented a whole new set of pressures and problems regarding quality, selection, and public image must e handled. There is a trade-off. What appears to be an expedient solution now may prove to put the states, the universities, and the future teachers in a vicious circle.

My recommendations are fairly simple: (a) explore all these pressures, issues and potential problems extensively; (b) project the implications five or ten or more years from now; and (c) if a decision is made to test, than do it to the minimum.

Do it so that it will not create adverse relationships between the state department of education and the universities. Do it so that it won't negatively affect the quality of programs and cause "teaching to the test." Do it so that it is not another burden for taxpayers and so that it doesn't add fuel to the public image fires concerning teacher quality and expenses for education. Finally, do it so that it doesn't cause anyone to point a finger at anyone else.

If it is done at all, perhaps the least offensive and least detrimental level/place to test is before entrance into a teacher education program. At this level the universities/colleges can administer the selected test(s) on their campuses at logical times for their students. If "quality assurance" at completion of programs is also necessary, ask the universities/colleges to determine quality, and to recommend or not recommend each of their students for certification. Then they can decide how they will do it. (See Note 2.)

Reference Notes

1. Information for this update of states' activities regarding competency testing were extrapolated from the following sources: Allan (1985), Bosworth (1985), Flippo and Foster (1984), Sandefur (1985), and Schnittjer and Flippo (1984), as well as from the additional research of this author.

2. There are a number of teacher education programs that are promising "quality assurance." These warranty assurance programs have been instigated by the universities/colleges that are attempting them. Oregon State University/Oregon State College, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Virginia, Doane College, Northern Colorado University, and Eastern Washington State College are the institutions that have been cited as offering these programs. For more information, refer to Barr (1984), and Antonelli (1984).

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Table 1

Educational Testing Service States and Tests

	Basic Skills (PPST)	Content Specialty/Area (NTE)	Core Batterya	Career Ladder Testing of Practicing Teachers
Arkansas		x	x[b]	
California	x[c]	x[d]	x[de]	
Delaware	x			
Florida		x[f]		x[f]
Indiana		g	g	
Kansas	x	g	g	
Kentucky		x[h]	x[h]	
Louisiana		x	x	
Maryland		g	g	
Mississippi		x	x	
Nebraska	g	g	g	
Nevada	x			
New Jersey		g	g	
New Mexico		x	x	
New York		g	x	
North Carolina		x	x	

(continued)

Table 1

Educational Testing Service States and Tests

	Basic Skills (PPST)	Content Specialty/Area (NTE)	Core Batterya	Career Ladder Testing of Practicing Teachers
South Carolina		x[i]		
Tennessee		x	x	x
Texas	x			
Virginia		x	x	
West Virginia		x[i]	x	

Note. Table information from Bosworth (1985).

[a]The Core Battery Tests include: Communication Skills, General Knowledge, Professional knowledge. [b]Two core Battery Tests are required. [c]Uses PPST but with 2 essays and no multiple choice questions. [d]Uses as an alternative to the approved-program approach for certification. [e]Uses only the General Knowledge test. [f]Uses five Content Speciality tests in its Master Teacher Program. [g]Under consideration. [h]Tests have been validated or are being validated for state use. [i]NTEs were validated and used where possible; NES developed/developing others.

Table 2

National Evaluation Systems States and Tests

	Basic Skills	Content Area	Pedagogy/ Professional Knowledge	Career Ladder/ Testing of Practicing Teachers
Alabama	x	x	x	
Arizona	x[a]			
Connecticut	x[b]	c		
Georgia		x		c
Oklahoma	c	x		c
South Carolina	x	x[d]		
Texas		x[b]		
West Virginia	x[b]	x[bd]		

Note. Table information from Allan (1985).

[a]NES developed items, but the state handles administrations. [b]Test(s) currently under development. [c]Under consideration. [d]NTEs were validated and used where possible; NES developed/developing others.